

Heritage Council of Victoria Corporate Plan 2018–19



***To lead in the recognition and
conservation of Victoria's cultural
heritage***

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Chair's Foreword

The Heritage Council of Victoria ('the Council') is an independent statutory body with the key function of identifying and protecting places and objects of cultural heritage significance to the State of Victoria. Our principal role is to ensure that Victoria's diverse cultural heritage is enjoyed, managed and protected for current and future generations. The *Heritage Act 2017* governs our work and Clause 9 of Schedule 1 provides that the Council must prepare a Corporate Plan for each financial year. The Heritage Council Corporate Plan 2018–19 is the Council's first Corporate Plan, and replaces the Council's Business Plan which has previously included similar content.

The Heritage Council Corporate Plan 2018–19 works in conjunction with our Strategic Plan 2016–2020, which gives a five-year overview of the Council's strategic activities and objectives, and our Annual Report, which reports on activities following the close of each financial year.

As a Council we recognise and acknowledge that cultural heritage is at the heart of many communities. Cultural heritage creates a sense of place, linked to our history, that enriches our lives. It provides both social and economic benefits. The Council continues to discharge its statutory responsibilities and strives to meet community expectations at a time of intense concern for the State's cultural heritage. The Council also seeks to undertake strategic work to improve heritage practice, ensure Victorians understand how heritage protection works, improve partnerships with other agencies and stakeholders and foster greater appreciation of how cultural heritage enriches the State. Our strategic activities and projects, along with the discharge of our statutory responsibilities under the *Heritage Act 2017*, are informed by this approach.

This Corporate Plan sets out the objectives, main undertakings and priority activities through which the Council intends to discharge its responsibilities and achieve its functions while also giving an account of estimated financial projections. We hope it informs you of the anticipated scope of the work of the Heritage Council of Victoria for 2018–19.



Prof Stuart Macintyre AO
Chair, Heritage Council of Victoria



1.0 Heritage Council of Victoria

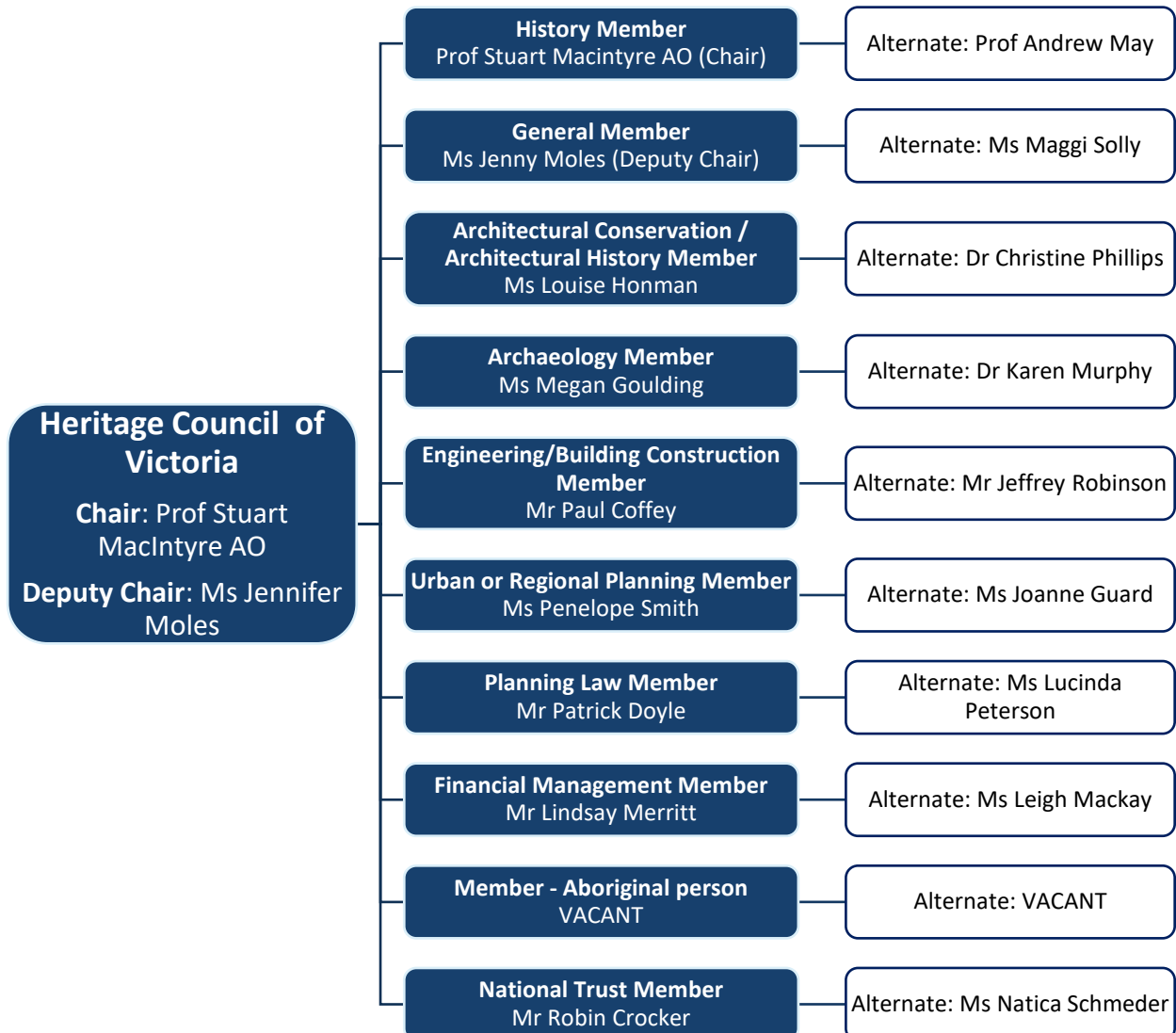
The Council is an independent statutory authority established under the *Heritage Act 2017* (the Act) as the Victorian Government’s primary decision-making body on the identification of places and objects of (non-Indigenous) cultural heritage significance to the State of Victoria.

The Council lists places and objects of state-wide cultural heritage significance in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) and hears reviews and appeals, principally in relation to registration recommendations and permit decisions made by the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria.

1.1 Council Members

The Council consists of 10 members and 10 alternate members who represent a broad cross-section of heritage specialists and the community. Members are appointed by the Governor-in-Council on the recommendation of the Minister for Planning. The Act has introduced three new categories of member expertise whose introduction will be staggered over the next three years. The first of these is being instituted in 2018: ‘urban or regional planning’. The institution of this new category replaces the former *Heritage Act 1995* category of ‘property management’.

The following chart outlines all of the Council’s members and membership categories for 2018–19.



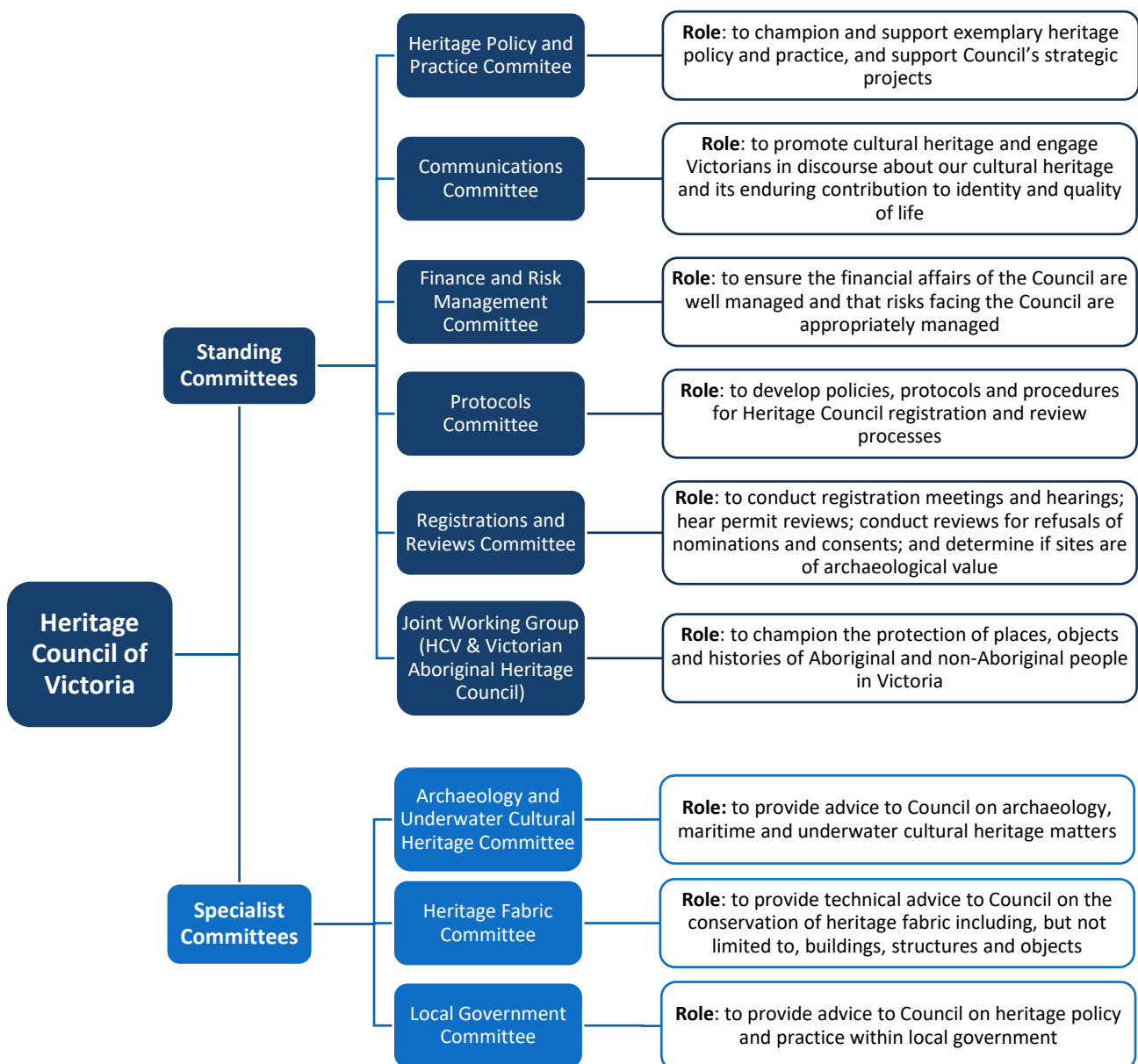
1.2 Council Committees

Under Part 2, Division 1, s.13 of the Act, the Council may establish committees to assist and advise it in fulfilling its statutory functions. There are two types of committees currently in operation:

Standing Committees – consisting of Council members only. Six standing committees have been constituted to ensure the effective operation of the Council, especially in relation to its legislative functions. The Standing Committees meet at least six times per year and, on Council’s behalf, undertake some of its most critical and demanding work. This work includes: the conduct of hearings and reviews and the proper statutory administration of the Act; the management of the Council’s finances; the oversight of strategic, educational and promotional activities; the development of heritage policy and practice; and the partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council.

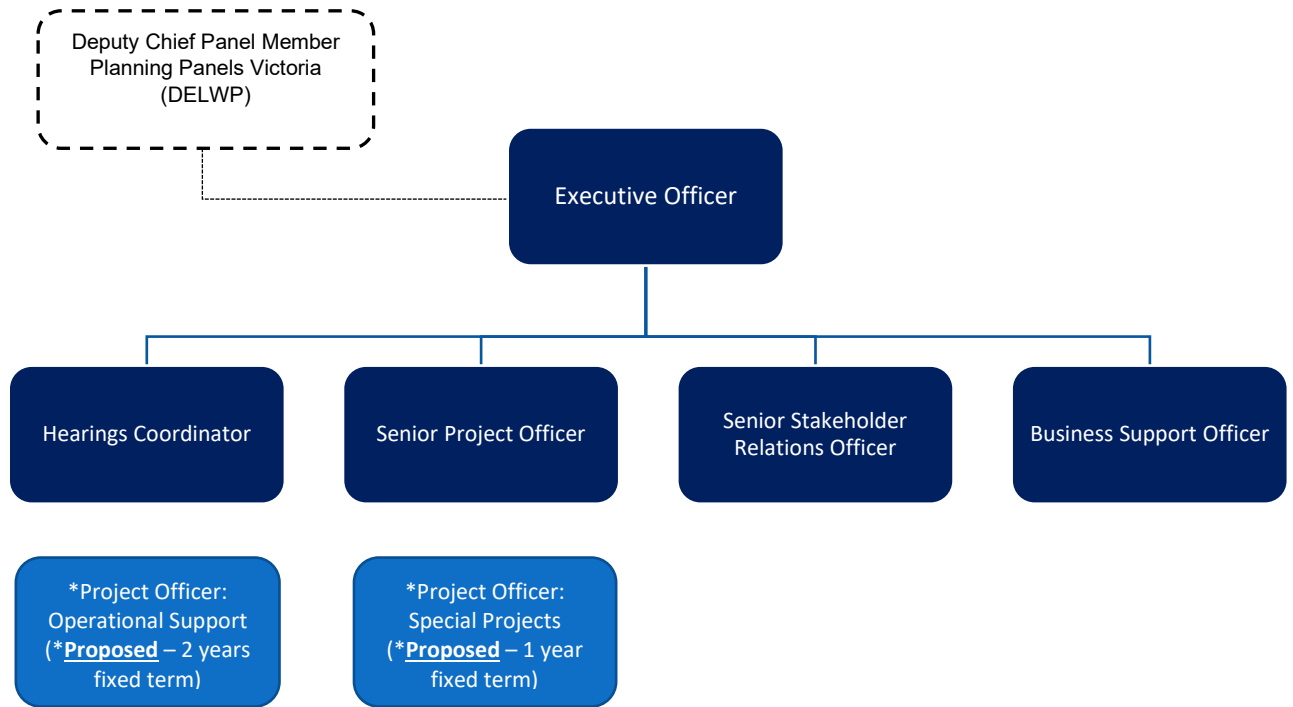
Specialist Committees – consisting of Council members and external subject-matter experts. Three specialist committees were constituted following the commencement of the Act to advise the Council on cultural heritage matters pertaining to specific subject areas. The Specialist Committees meet four times per year and provide advice to the Council as needed.

The following chart outlines the committees that will be operating in 2018–19 and their different roles:



1.3 Secretariat

The Council does not employ any staff but is supported by a small Secretariat consisting of Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) employees. It is led by an Executive Officer who is the Council's Accountable Officer and is responsible for day-to-day matters. The Executive Officer reports to the Deputy Chief Panel Member, Planning Panels Victoria, DELWP.



2.0 Mission, Vision and Values

The Council uses the following strategic statements, taken from its Strategic Plan 2016–2020, to guide its work. The Council's Strategic Plan 2016–2020 and its stated *Mission, Vision and Values* guide and inform the Council's objectives, priorities, main undertakings and activities as set out in the following sections of the Council's Corporate Plan 2018–19.

2.1 Mission

To lead in the recognition and conservation of Victoria's cultural heritage.

2.2 Vision

Victorians connect with and value our diverse cultural heritage, acting as custodians for the stories of the past, present and future. Within this vision we aspire to have:

- Victorian communities, government, landowners and custodians understand the value of heritage and its contribution to enriched places and culture
- a world-class Victorian heritage system that protects and enhances heritage.

2.3 Values

Respect for heritage

We value Victoria's heritage as an asset to be enjoyed and appreciated by all as an expression of our history, places and culture.

Collaboration

We value the knowledge others bring to heritage conservation, and encourage the sharing of experience and information.

Innovation

We value the exploration of new approaches to ensure a more sustainable future for Victoria's cultural heritage.

Skilled practice

We value the skills and resources that enable best-practice heritage management across the State to ensure the continuation of our precious heritage resources.

3.0 Objectives, Main Undertakings and Scope of Activities

3.1 Current Operating Context – Overview

As an independent statutory authority, the Council is very mindful of its obligations to the State, the community and Victoria's cultural heritage in all of its activities. The Council strives to meet community expectations in compliance, transparency and good governance. As well as its clear obligations under the Act, the Council is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of its Annual Report, in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards and the *Financial Management Act 1994*. Performance in relation to the objectives and priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan is now required to be included in its Annual Report. The Council's Annual Report is audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994*.

The Council notes that many external factors which influence its activities are changing. The pace and scale of growth and development throughout Victoria, particularly in Melbourne, has generated intense concern for the State's cultural heritage assets. This operating environment, coupled with the changes to the Act, is generating a measurable increase in the Council's statutory workload, resulting in changes to the Council's revenue pattern and a typically complex range of regulatory matters. Concern for the State's cultural heritage has also resulted in increased engagement by stakeholders in the Council's strategic and partnership work. This evolving operating context requires the Council to examine ways of improving efficiency, whilst planning for increased staff and resources, continuing to conduct its strategic work effectively and maintain best-practice decision-making. The continuous examination and analysis of the Council's operating context is consistent with the goals of the Council's Strategic Plan 2016–2020 and has resulted in the objectives set out below.

3.2 Objectives

The objectives listed below are related to the Council's **priority activities** and **performance targets** (see Section 5 of this Corporate Plan) and generally correspond to certain strategic goals listed in the Council's Strategic Plan 2016–2020. The Council's 2018–19 objectives are that:

- *More Victorians understand the role that heritage plays in the life of our communities.*
- *The Council completes at least three widely used projects to champion and support exemplary heritage practice.*
- *The Council works effectively with managers of natural, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage to encourage a greater understanding of cultural heritage.*
- *The Council has capacity to provide robust and effective advice to the Minister.*
- *The Council has capacity to make and communicate high-quality decisions that are consistent and well-informed.*

3.3 Main Undertakings

The Council's identified objectives have been informed by the following main undertakings:

Provision of Advice

One of the Council's key roles is to advise the Minister for Planning on the State of Victoria's cultural (non-Indigenous) heritage resources and any steps necessary to protect and conserve them.

The Council also has a role in advising and liaising with other bodies and individuals that have responsibilities in heritage protection and conservation in Victoria, including local government, community organisations and heritage owners/managers.

Determination of state-level significance and archaeological value

The Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) provides the State's highest level of legal protection for our cultural (non-Indigenous) heritage. The Council determines which places and objects are of State-level heritage significance and are included in the VHR.

The Council also determines if sites under 75 years of age have archaeological value and should therefore be included in the Heritage Inventory of Victorian archaeological sites.

Hearings and reviews

As prescribed by the Act, the Council conducts hearings or reviews in relation to requests for a review of: the Executive Director's recommendations for inclusion or non-inclusion in the VHR; the determination of permit applications; refusals of nominations for the VHR; and, consents for certain activities at archaeological sites.

Promotion of cultural heritage

The Council works to promote public understanding of Victoria's cultural heritage.

Undertaking research

The Council initiates and undertakes research to identify Victoria's heritage and assist in its conservation and interpretation. The Council may do this itself or in partnership with other government or community bodies.

Governance and Compliance

As an independent statutory authority with its own financial management responsibilities, the Council has multiple governance and compliance activities and reporting requirements. Please refer to the Council's 2017–18 Annual Report for further detailed information.

3.4 Nature and Scope of Activities

The Council's Strategic Plan 2016–2020 sets out the strategic goals and activities that inform its objectives and main undertakings. The Council's core functions (as outlined in the Act, Part 2, Division 1, s.11) can be found at Appendix A. The Council's core functions and objectives will determine its activities and their scope, as set out in further detail in Section 5 below. The nature and scope of activities include:

- attending to core statutory functions (making determinations, conducting hearings and reviews) in relation to the VHR, the Heritage Inventory, nominations, permits and consents
- management of the Heritage Fund, publication of the Corporate Plan and Annual Report
- providing advice to the Minister on the state of Victoria's cultural heritage resources and on any steps necessary to protect and conserve it – including by conducting a review and developing a report on the state of cultural heritage in Victoria
- developing guidelines and research in relation to the protection and conservation of cultural heritage – including a review of the *Criteria and Threshold Guidelines*
- activities to promote public understanding of the State's cultural heritage – including conducting public forums, industry workshops and developing strategic partnerships such as those with *Open House*, *Design Week* and the *Australian Heritage Festival*
- conducting internal reviews, training and analysis in relation to the Council's core functions.

4.0 Financial Projections 2018–21

4.1 Estimates of 2018-21 Revenue, Expenditure and Overall Financial Position for the Heritage Fund, managed by the Council pursuant to s.11(1)(o) and Part 11 of the Act

The Heritage Fund - Managed by the Heritage Council				
	Budget			
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000
Revenue				
DELWP contribution	500	250	250	250
Fees Revenue	650	1,440	1,440	1,440
TCV Interest	50	30	30	30
Total	1,200	1,720	1,720	1,720
Expenditure				
Admin and Remuneration	1,000	1,175	1,190	1,200
Communications	120	100	100	100
Strategic Projects	175	170	100	100
Grant to Heritage Victoria	130	110	110	110
Legacy Grants	469	120	175	165
Projects	142	45	45	45
Total	2,036	1,720	1,720	1,720
Budget Position	(836)	-	-	-
HCV	Budget	Forecast		
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000
Revenue	1,200	1,720	1,720	1,720
Expenditure	2,036	1,720	1,720	1,720
Budget Position	(836)	-	-	-
Accumulated funds	2,500			
2017-18 Budget position*	(836)			
Overall position	1,664			

*Notes on the \$836k budget deficit figure for 2017-18:

- The \$836,000 budget deficit in 2017-18 is due mainly to legacy grants and projects which were transferred to the Council but are managed through Heritage Victoria. Historically, the budget has been built to include all the outstanding commitments, which has resulted in an apparent deficit in the overall budget position.
- As at 30 April 2018, the Council was in surplus of \$112,000. Legacy Grants from past grant programs are managed through the Heritage Fund. These include items such as

the Victorian Property Fund, the Victorian Heritage Grants, the Murtoa Stick Shed grant and other Heritage Victoria Projects.

- In 2018-19 and beyond, the Council has adopted a budget approach where only grants and projects expected to be expended in the 12 month period are budgeted for.
- The Heritage Fund holds investments with Treasury Corporation of Victoria of \$2.5 million which can be drawn down as required.

Notes on the Council's Financial Projections 2018–21

- The commencement of the Act on 1 November 2017 (and the commencement of the *Heritage Regulations 2017*) brought substantial changes to the Heritage Fund fee structure (for user-pay fee amounts paid into the fund pursuant to s.235[1][a]) and increases in fee amounts payable under the Act.
- From 1 November 2017, an increase in fee amounts payable coupled with a high level of fee-relevant activity under the Act has resulted in an increase in Heritage Fund fee revenue.
- From 1 November 2017, the Council's operating expenditure also increased, which was in part the result of the Council's work in preparing for transition to the Act and in part the result of increased regulatory activity.
- The Council has adopted a 'balanced-budget' approach to the Heritage Fund budget to reflect the prevailing increase in fee revenue. This approach includes increases in staffing expenditure and increased costs associated with the administration of the Act.
- The majority of Heritage Fund revenue is subject to prevailing economic conditions. As such, the Council considers that a DELWP operating grant must be maintained to fund part of the Council's base-level administrative costs. That contribution is expected to be reduced in 2018-19 from \$500,000 to \$250,000.
- The Council has previously been constrained in its capacity to undertake many of its statutory functions, such as promoting public understanding of the State's cultural heritage (s.11[1][c]). The current projected increase in revenue allows the Council to plan to attend to some of its non-regulatory functions.

5.0 Objectives, Priority Activities and Performance Targets for 2018–19

The Council's objectives listed below include those which generally correspond to certain strategic goals listed in the Council's Strategic Plan 2016–2020.

Objective	2018–19 Priority Activities	Performance Targets
<p>More Victorians understand the role that heritage plays in the life of our communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Council to speak on important heritage issues, including at an increased range of events in Victoria Increased use of social media platforms Run new and promote existing programs that improve community understanding of and connection to cultural heritage Work with the Minister, Heritage Victoria, National Trust, local government, community heritage organisations and other stakeholders to communicate and clarify responsibilities and processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased member participation in an increased range of public events in 2018–19, compared with previous years An increase in measurable social media activity in 2018–19, including all publicly advertised events and high-profile decisions The commencement during 2018–19 of the proposed Review of the State of Cultural Heritage
<p>The Council completes at least three widely used projects to champion and support exemplary heritage practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop resources for different stakeholders to improve their awareness of best-practice cultural heritage Conduct work to understand and better recognise the social significance of cultural heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Criteria and Threshold Guidelines in relation to Criterion G (social significance) by June 2019 Review and assessment of pilot study results in relation to the Heritage Technical Codes by December 2018 Expansion of the Open House partnership in July 2018
<p>The Council works effectively with managers of natural, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage to encourage a greater understanding of cultural heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with agencies and custodians responsible for natural, Aboriginal and non-Indigenous cultural heritage to improve collaboration and understanding of cultural heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Joint Working Group will hold four meetings in 2018–19 The Joint Working Group will develop actions in response to the Final Report recommendations by March 2019

Objective	2018–19 Priority Activities	Performance Targets
<p>The Council has capacity to provide robust and effective advice to the Minister</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake regular analysis and training to ensure the Council is well equipped with the training and skills required to fulfil our role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where a request for advice is received from the Minister, consultation or engagement with any relevant stakeholder(s) will occur prior to provision of advice and within 30 days of receipt Two strategic training sessions delivered to the Heritage Council during 2018–19
<p>The Council has capacity to make and communicate high-quality decisions that are consistent and well informed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine ways to improve efficiency and increase resources to the Council, including advocacy for increased staff and planning for project funds Perform our statutory functions efficiently and effectively and review processes to ensure best-practice decision making and improved procedures for hearings Provide strategic training for members to ensure best-practice hearings practices and protocols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a review of issues with key regulatory provisions of the Act and advise the Minister. Undertake a budgetary and operational analysis to ensure adequate staff to support statutory functions Conduct at least one strategic (hearings) training session in 2018–19

Appendix A – The Council’s Core Functions

Core Functions:

The Council has the following statutory functions, as set out in Part 2, Division 1, s.11, of the *Heritage Act 2017*.

- to advise the Minister on the Status of the State’s cultural heritage resources and on any steps necessary to protect and conserve them
- to make and publish guidelines in relation to the conservation of cultural heritage
- to promote public understanding of the State’s cultural heritage and develop and conduct community information and education programs
- to advise government departments and agencies and municipal councils on matters relating to the protection and conservation of places and objects of cultural heritage significance
- to liaise with other bodies responsible for matters relating to the protection, conservation, management and promotion of Victoria’s cultural heritage
- to initiate and undertake programs of research related to the identification, conservation or interpretation of Victoria’s cultural heritage
- to include places or objects in the Heritage Register
- to remove places or objects from the Heritage Register, or to amend the registration of a place or object
- to remove sites from the Heritage Inventory
- to conduct reviews of decisions of the Executive Director in relation to nominations, permits and consents
- to develop, revise and publish the assessment criteria to be used in considering the cultural heritage significance of places and objects and determining whether those places or objects should or should not be included in the Heritage Register
- to adopt, and forward to the Minister, World Heritage Strategy Plans and amendments to World Heritage Strategy Plans
- to determine criteria for assessing whether a place has archaeological value
- to advise the Minister administering the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, on proposed amendments to planning schemes which may affect the protection or conservation of cultural heritage
- to manage the Heritage Fund
- to perform any other functions conferred on the Heritage Council under this Act or any other Act.